

TWA/American Airline Workforce Integration

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Witness:

Theodore Case

Former Secretary Treasurer

TWA-MEC (ALPA)

Snellville, GA

Testimony:

Chairman Bond and Members of the Committee, I sincerely appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today. On behalf of my fellow pilots who were formerly employed by Trans World Airlines (TWA), we welcome the opportunity to testify on the record and under oath about the whole story, the real story behind the most shamefully flawed seniority integration in United States airline history.

Many of you are already familiar with some of the facts of this crisis: to date thousands of ex-TWA workers -- including ground workers and flight attendants -- and their families have suffered as a result of layoffs; the great state of Missouri, and the entire St. Louis region has felt sharp economic shock and emotional trauma caused by these massive job cuts.

The uniform hat that you see here today symbolizes the thousands of men and women who built TWA over more than 75 years, and who now have seen American Airlines' promises turn into pink slips.

I believe, like so many of my colleagues, that we became pilots to serve the flying public -- safely and responsibly -- to the best of our ability. I am honored to have been selected by my fellow pilots to speak on their behalf today.

I am a married father of two, a graduate of Georgia State University and have served as a representative of the TWA pilots in multiple capacities.

My interest in flying began as a young boy watching my father fly as a pilot for Eastern Airlines. I began flying when I was 20, became a commercial pilot in 1983, and began flying for TWA in 1990. I loved my job, I respected my employer, and above all, I believed in my customer service mission.

My world -- and the lives of all of my former TWA colleagues -- dramatically changed in April 2001, when American Airlines acquired TWA. As part of the acquisition, American offered virtually all former TWA pilots employment. Quoting from portions of the bankruptcy asset purchase agreement: "Purchaser offers to: (iii) provide employment benefits and post-retirement benefits to all employees actually hired by Purchaser (American), at levels substantially no less favorable than those benefits provided to Purchaser's (American's) similarly situated employees."

The TWA employees took that promise to heart.

When the transaction was announced I was a 10 year, Boeing-767 International First Officer. My American counterpart was also a 10 year, Boeing-767 International First Officer. Just last week I received my furlough notice, while my similarly situated American counterpart enjoys his or her continued employment.

To put this in a personal perspective, a good friend of mine, Sally Young, a single mother of two and a 14 year-veteran former TWA Captain, will lose her job on July 2. I too, will

lose my job on July 2 after 16 years as a career jet airline pilot, with over 13 years of seniority with TWA and American Airlines.

On April 9, 2001, American hired Mr. B.D. White. Today Mr. White, who now has 2 years and 2 months of American Airlines experience and seniority, continues to fly while Ms. Young, myself and hundreds more former TWA pilots like us are being furloughed. In February 2001 many of you heard Don Carty, former AMR CEO state before the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, his commitment to “adding TWA’s 20,000 employees to the American Airlines family.” A willing commitment “to the 20,000 TWA employees and their families that no one else would make.” Obviously Mr. Carty said what the Senate Committee and the Bankruptcy Court needed to hear to approve the deal, with no intention whatsoever of living up to those commitments.

Unknown to us at the time American made those promises to the TWA employees, Congress and the bankruptcy court, they were also making promises to their unions. American’s promises to their unions empowered them to hijack the experience and seniority of the TWA pilots and employees.

It is now clear American’s promise of employment was a hollow one, designed only to quell Congress’ concerns and to clear regulatory hurdles to close the transaction. Once this was accomplished and the deal was no longer news, or under the watchful eye of legislators, American callously discarded the TWA employees.

Although American pilots claim to be “sharing the pain” of the airline’s troubles, more than 87% of pre-transaction American pilots will retain their employment while only 23% of the former TWA pilots will remain employed by May 2004.

Members of the committee, we are not here seeking sympathy or pity. We are here in the name of justice and fairness. We are here in hope that Congress can rectify this atrocity and act so this tragedy can never again be repeated in another workplace to the detriment of another working man or woman.

We ask only, that our all important seniority rights be handled “fairly and equitably”, as promised. No more and no less. I hope you and the American people can now clearly see that our seniority was handled unfairly and inequitably by an airline that can now only be called, Un-American Airlines.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak before this committee today and I am happy to answer any questions.